

# **Railroad Junction**

## **By Carl Mellor**

The Salt Lake and Western Railroad track left Lehi Junction, crossed the Jordan River followed the overland and Pony Express route through Cedar Valley, Fairfield, and Rush Valley, reaching the mining areas of Silver City, Mammoth, Diamond and Eureka.

In 1894, the Salt Lake and Mercur Railroad branched off the line near Fairfield. The railroads were an economic lifeblood of the Junction, spawning general stores, leaching works, assay offices and an artificial stone plant.

A large roundhouse and machine shop were a part of the scene. Both of these were destroyed in a freak wind on 2 October 1884. The roundhouse was rebuilt only to be destroyed again in 1922. A Union Pacific crew hooked onto some empty Railroad cars, including a rail loader three feet higher than the round house doors. The engine and three cars passed through safely, but the rail loader pulled the roundhouse down as the train passed through.

Limestone for the Lehi Sugar Company came through Junction from Topliff. On one of the trips a train loaded with limestone and pulling a passenger car hit a broken rail near Fairfield. The passenger car broke loose and rolled down an embankment. As the car turned over twice, the thirteen passengers, a hot stove, lamps, and loose furniture were flung helter skelter. No one was killed but all the passengers suffered bruises, cuts or broken bones.

Lehi's Junction became a self-contained community. The Franklin School opened there in 1875 and in 1894 the old Third Ward Meeting House (still standing) was constructed.